Future predictions are by their nature speculative but some things are certain: the tobacco epidemic, with its attendant health and economic burden, is both increasing and also shifting from developed to developing nations; and more women are smoking.

The industry is consolidating, and also shifting from the west to developing regions, where there may be less government control and public debate about the role of transnational tobacco companies.

The future looks bleak; the global tobacco epidemic is worse today than it was 50 years ago. And it will be even worse in another 50 years unless an extraordinary effort is made now. Several countries have already shown that smoking rates can be reduced. These successes can be reproduced by any responsible nation, but only through immediate, determined, and sustained governmental and public action.

### The Future

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of smokers assuming constant prevalence and medium variant projected population</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4 billion</td>
<td>1.4 billion</td>
<td>1.6 billion</td>
<td>2.0 billion</td>
<td>2.2 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Number of smokers assuming reduced prevalence of -1.0% p.a., medium variant projected population</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.3 billion</td>
<td>1.4 billion</td>
<td>1.4 billion</td>
<td>1.6 billion</td>
<td>1.5 billion</td>
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#### Health

- Tobacco's share of global death and disability is 3%.
- 700 million children exposed to passive smoking at home.
- 83% of smokers live in developing countries.
- Individuals genetically prone to tobacco-related diseases can be identified at birth.
- Cancer, currently untreatable, could be treated.
- Niche technology for diagnosis and treatment will be expensive and have little impact on global mortality statistics.
- Tobacco's share of global death and disability increases to 9%.
- 85% of smokers live in poor countries.
- Spectacular advances in investigation, diagnosis and treatment of tobacco-related diseases, but unlikely to affect global mortality.
- New viral virus pandemic temporarily pushes tobacco issues completely off the agenda.
- Tobacco control funded from a managed tobacco industry, with tobacco-attributable health care costs reimbursed and compensation paid to individual smokers and non-smokers harmed by tobacco.
- Cigarettes only available on prescription.
- The gap between rich and poor countries grows as health services in poor countries collapse under the strain of tobacco disease and deaths.
- Global annual economic costs of tobacco: US$1 trillion a year.
- Tobacco dependent economies are assisted in understanding of the issue, and policies, politics and actions taken today.
- The tobacco industry is fully regulated, with licensing of nicotine as an addictive drug, and manufacture, promotion and sale under strict regulatory control by government agencies.
- Much of the developed world moves to a tobacco-free agenda.
- Tobacco control funded from a managed tobacco industry, with tobacco-attributable health care costs reimbursed and compensation paid to individual smokers and non-smokers harmed by tobacco.
- Cigarettes only available on prescription.
- The tobacco industry is fully regulated, with licensing of nicotine as an addictive drug, and manufacture, promotion and sale under strict regulatory control by government agencies.
- Tobacco control funded from a managed tobacco industry, with tobacco-attributable health care costs reimbursed and compensation paid to individual smokers and non-smokers harmed by tobacco.
- Cigarettes only available on prescription.

#### Economics

- Global annual economic costs of tobacco: US$500 billion a year by 2010.
- Tobacco-related illnesses rise to top health expenditure in many countries.
- Many governments conclude the economic costs of tobacco outweigh any benefit.
- Tobacco companies now based in Asia.
- Tobacco control funded from a managed tobacco industry, with tobacco-attributable health care costs reimbursed and compensation paid to individual smokers and non-smokers harmed by tobacco.
- Cigarettes only available on prescription.
- New, commercially profitable uses of tobacco are found.

#### Tobacco industry

- Attempts to produce genetically modified tobacco with lower nicotine.
- Some tobacco companies buy pharmaceutical companies.
- The industry tries to re-position its public image as a responsible corporation.
- The industry seeks regulation on its own terms.
- Industry consolidation leads to 2 or 3 huge conglomerates accounting for the bulk of global sales.
- Continued privatisation sees end of state-run tobacco companies.
- Niche markets still exist for smaller players (e.g. cigars, snuff).
- Liberalisation of global trade rules welcomed by the industry.
- Smuggled cigarettes overtake legal sales.
- Industry consolidation leads to 2 or 3 huge conglomerates accounting for the bulk of global sales.
- Continued privatisation sees end of state-run tobacco companies.
- Niche markets still exist for smaller players (e.g. cigars, snuff).
- Liberalisation of global trade rules welcomed by the industry.
- Smuggled cigarettes overtake legal sales.
- The future is uncertain… Some of these events may never occur…

#### Action taken

- Framework Convention on Tobacco Control ratified.
- Some countries ban smoking.
- Incentives for quitting include money savings through rebates and lower health insurance premiums.
- Deaths about new “less hazardous” products increase.
- In developed countries, there is a gradual shift in the perception of smoking so it comes to be seen as anti-social.
- Elimination of tobacco advertising and promotion worldwide.
- Vaccine produced to switch off nicotine receptors.
- Medical schools globally introduce systematic teaching on smoking.
- Tobacco controls funded from a managed tobacco industry, with tobacco-attributable health care costs reimbursed and compensation paid to individual smokers and non-smokers harmed by tobacco.
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